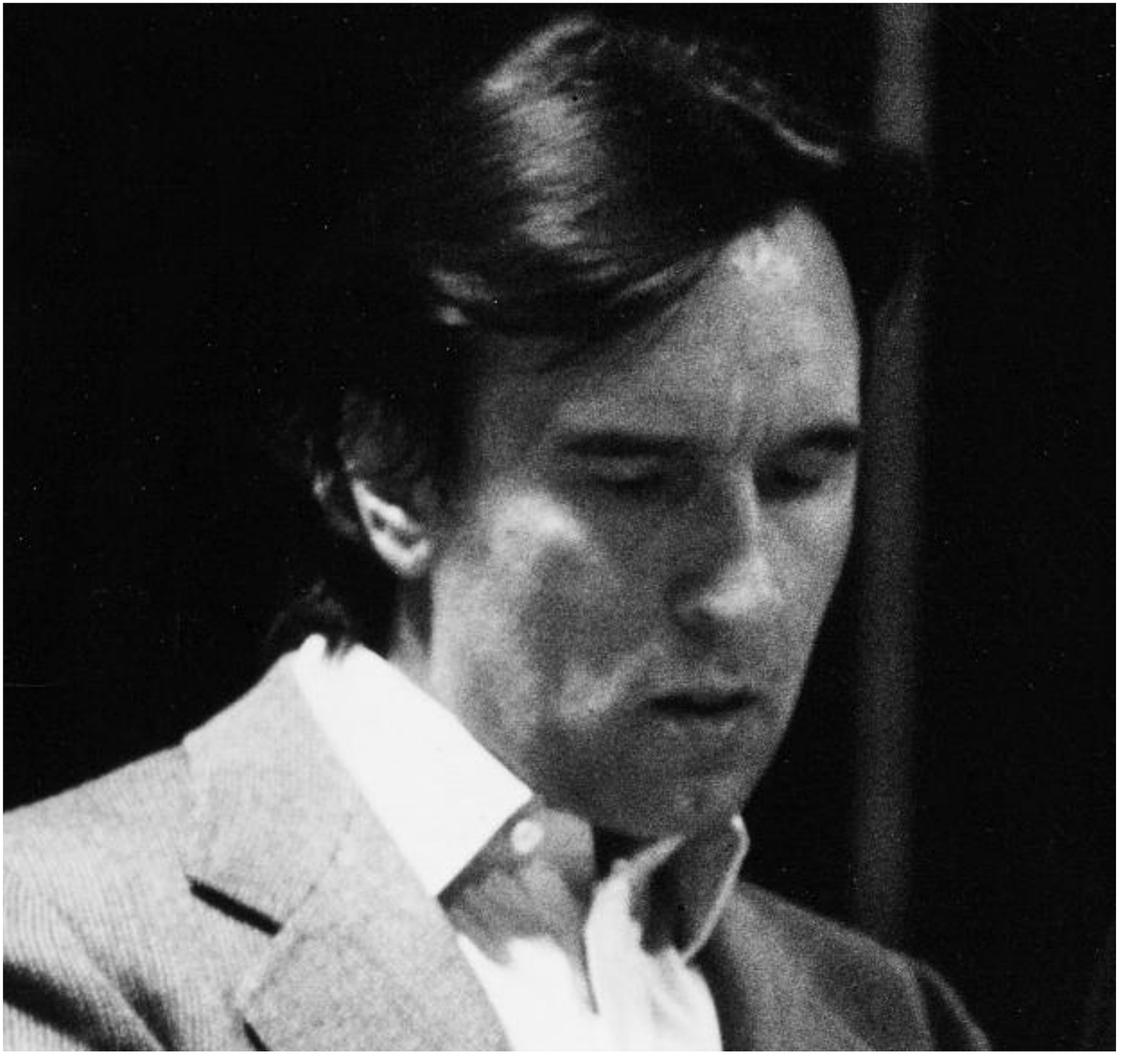
# LUCIANO PAVAROTTI
# CLAUDIO ABBADO
## ORCHESTRA DEL TEATRO ALLA SCALA

# GIUSEPPE VERDI RARITIES



# GIUSEPPE VERDI

(1813–1901)

# RARITIES

*(Tracks 1–4 and 6–8 revised by Pietro Spada)*

## Luciano Pavarotti*
## Orchestra del Teatro alla Scala
## Claudio Abbado

**1. Simon Boccanegra**
*Preludio 2'46"*

**2. Ernani**
*Odi il voto 4'40"*
Recitativo and Aria, Atto II
(with *Giuseppe Morresi* baritone
and *Alfredo Giacomotti* bass)

**3. Attila**
*Oh dolore! 3'37"*
Atto III

**4. Attila**
*Io la vidi 7'03"*
*Scena lirica* for two tenors and orchestra
(with *Antonio Savastano* tenor)

**5. I due Foscari**
*Dal più remoto esilio 5'07"*
Scena and Cavatina, Atto I
(with *Antonio Savastano* tenor)

**6. I due Foscari**
*Sì lo sento, Iddio mi chiama 4'14"*
Cabaletta, Atto I

**7. Les Vêpres siciliennes**
*Ô toi que j'ai chérie 3'54"*
Nouvelle Romance pour M. Villaret, Acte IV

**8. Aida**
*Sinfonia 11'02"*

* *Luciano Pavarotti appears by kind permission of* Decca Music Group Limited
Recording location: CTC Studios, Milan, January 1978 and April 1980

In the early years of the twentieth century, when the tendency to make Italian opera more like German music drama was starting to emerge, the legend of a rigorous and intransigent Verdi was born, such that not a single dot or comma he had written could be altered without provoking thunderbolts and other forms of apocalyptic retribution. This legend grew and gathered strength between the Twenties and the Fifties, involving other opera composers: Bellini, Donizetti and even Rossini, who was responsible for hundreds and hundreds of autograph variants and scores of alternative arias for this or that singer. But Donizetti was pretty active in this field too. He personally changed keys and made alterations even to an aria such as "Una furtiva lagrima"; or on his own initiative he requested, from Naples, a colleague who was in Vienna (Mercadante) to "adjust" — for the bass Lablache — a part which had been composed for another singer. In short, it was the practice to aim, with the help of an electrifying performance from the singers, for success with the audience, and Verdi, pragmatist that he was, wrote on more than one occasion that the only true measure of an opera's success was the takings at the box office. And this is why, when he was asked for substitute or additional arias, he complied if it was worth the trouble. For example, it has come to light that, for an edition of *Rigoletto* in Paris, he provided an aria ("Prends pitié de sa jeunesse") for Maddalena, who has no aria at all in the original score. This recording, on which substitute or additional arias occupy a fitting amount of space and, moreover, in a performance of which it is safe to say that it could set the standard for others, also contains instrumental pieces which have become neglected or have never been tried out in official performances: such as the brief *Preludio* from the first version of *Simon Boccanegra*, which fleetingly introduces several of the opera's melodies; or an overture which was intended for the first performance of *Aida* at La Scala but was not performed. And here the sequence of the opera's fundamental themes is much lengthier and more elaborate. Among the vocal pieces, chronological order assigns first place to the lyrical scene "Io la vidi", an exercise by a Verdi who had not yet made his debut in the theatre. Under the influence of his most authoritative predecessors (Bellini *in primis*, but also Donizetti) Verdi expresses himself in a lyrical and tender mode and, in specifically vocal terms, with an orthodoxy from which he was later to free himself: extremely cautious tessitura, very *legato* melody with no leaps, absolutely symmetrical periods with a view to the performer's intakes of breath. Certainly more historic than this, however, is the Andante "Odi il voto", concluded by the Allegro maestoso "Sprezzo la vita". It is a second-act finale for *Ernani* and, apart from its size and spectacularity, raises — like almost all the arias on this recording — the complex question of the tenor's place in early Verdi. There

are grounds for suspecting that Verdi was not initially very fond of the tenor voice and — before *Luisa Miller* — treated it rather clumsily. The reason for this unease is perhaps to be found in the fact that the proto-romantic tenor, forged by Bellini and partly by Donizetti, had a voice which was very bright, very high, very stylised — and therefore rather artificial — and which could distantly recall the timbre of the alto castratos. Especially where male voices were concerned Verdi was in favour of realism (he preferred the most realistic of all, the baritone) and began to make proper use of the tenor only when more masculine, ringing voices appeared at the end of the 1840s. *Ernani* had been the first opera composed by Verdi for a tenor protagonist, but the composer made some misjudgements and did not sufficiently take into account that Carlo Guasco, for whom the part was written, was a proto-romantic singer, all sweetness and grace. Outcome: Guasco, one of the most celebrated tenors of his day, was a disappointment. Apart from this it is fairly clear that, in the customary version, the part of Ernani is rather insignificant for a protagonist. The insertion of a big aria with choruses in the second-act finale was presumably — in addition to being a mark of respect towards Rossini, who pleaded the tenor Nicola Ivanov's case — an attempt to give greater scope to Ernani. What nevertheless appears strange is that a pleasant andante in pathetic mode should be followed by a vigorous, taut and vehement allegro, which at least on paper looks unsuitable for Ivanov, who — like Guasco and even more than Guasco — went back to the paradisial proto-romanticism of the Bellinian Giovanni Battista Rubini. Yet Ivanov was successful and this perhaps helped to endorse the prevailing opinion for the following few years that Ernani was a part for a tenore di grazia.

The cabaletta from *I due Foscari* "Sì lo sento, Iddio mi chiama", written for the tenor Mario to replace the one normally performed after the cavatina "Dal più remoto esilio" (i.e. the allegro "Odio solo ed odio atroce") has a very different story behind it. For the Rome premiere of the opera Verdi finally had a tenore di forza at his disposal, Giacomo Roppa, and this led him to exhort Piave in a letter in May 1844 to take this into account in the cabaletta. And the allegro "Odio solo ed odio atroce", although fairly central in tessitura, is indeed vigorous and aggressive. But when it came to performing *I due Foscari* in Paris two years later, the same considerations were no longer applicable. In Paris the singer was Matteo de' Candia, known as Mario, extremely handsome, supremely elegant, a local idol, much more famous than Roppa but, alas, of Rubinian lineage: sweet, graceful, bright, extremely high and a lover — like Rubini — of falsetto top notes. Nothing could be denied to Mario, a fiery patriot and exile into the bargain. Verdi served him properly, with an allegro moderato with a very high tessitura containing some passages of pure vocalisation and even a couple of top E flats to be sung falsetto. It is a

strange aria, but also an attractive one. If the singer who tackles it has the appropriate technique, the melody seems light and elegant. The Adagio "Oh dolore" from *Attila* is another story of mistaken tenorial assessment. Once again Verdi, composing for the suave and elegant Guasco, had given him un unsuitable character, this time Foresto, seething alternately with patriotism and jealousy. The aria which is usually performed, "Che non avrebbe il misero", is in fact reasonably mournful and quite smooth and legato in its vocal line. But for Napoleone Moriani, the Foresto in the Scala premiere (1846/47 season), something softer and with more pathos was needed. Although the Florentine Moriani was the rather heartless father of the two children of Giuseppina Strepponi, the future Signora Verdi, he was also "The Swan of the Arno", "the tenor of sadness" and "the tenor of the bella morte", so harrowing were his death throes on stage. So Verdi wrote for him the Adagio "Oh dolore", impassioned, melancholy, supremely romantic, in which "the swan" suffered to the sound of chaste harps. Finally, one of the gems of the collection, the Largo "Ô toi que j'ai chérie", written for the tenor François Villaret, who sang in the revival of *Les Vêpres siciliennes* at the Paris Opéra in 1863. By then Verdi had long since overcome his awkward relationship with the tenor voice, and for the Paris premiere (1855) had written the fine Andante mosso "Ô jour de peine" ("Giorno di pianto" in Italian). But the Largo "Ô toi que j'ai chérie" has the flow, the candour, the elegiac abandon of proto-romantic effusions and also a slight flavour of French melody: something that can be compared, in its heartfelt simplicity, with "Rachel, quand du Seigneur" from Halévy's *La Juive*. It would be interesting to know how Villaret coped with it, since he seems to have been more a rough *tenore di forza* than a singer of elegies. But that, at this stage, is a very difficult thing to establish.

Rodolfo Celletti

To speak nowadays about unperformed works by Giuseppe Verdi seems absurd, since he has enjoyed such uninterrupted popularity and circulation as to make it almost incredible that there should be compositions, however minor, that are still completely unknown. But Verdi was, at least for a certain period of his life, sensitive to the demands of great singers, who could often decree the success or failure of an opera, and, as a mark of recognition, he wrote additional or substitute pieces for several of them — essentially the pieces presented here, for the first time ever on a recording. In contrast, the orchestral pieces included here were put aside by the composer and were not included in the final editions of the works for which they were conceived. It is now difficult to establish with certainty the reasons which led Verdi to make these substitutions or

omissions: it can however be presumed that they were discarded due to dramatic rather than musical considerations. Verdi, being an extremely shrewd man of the theatre, had a profound and infallible sensitivity to the demands of the stage and knew how to prune every superfluous moment from an opera's development. The Prelude from *Simon Boccanegra* belongs to the first version of the opera and was thus first performed in Venice, at La Fenice, in 1857, but Verdi replaced it with another piece in the second version. Although the composition is of modest dimensions it is of considerable interest: it contains no thematic development, but it makes extensive use of the "rebellion" theme and also that from the duet "Figlia a tal nome io palpito". The edition used by Claudio Abbado is based on two contemporary copies, substantially concordant, one in the Biblioteca del Conservatorio di San Pietro a Majella in Naples and the other in the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. (USA).

"Odi il voto", a recitative and aria which is part of the "Aria con cori" for *Ernani*, an extensive piece which actually amounts to a different finale to Act II of the opera, was commissioned from Verdi by Rossini for the Russian tenor Nicola Ivanov; this "Aria con cori" dedicated to the tenor, as can be read on the first page of the score, was not included in the current edition until its recent reappearance in the autograph collection of the Mary Flager Cary Collection in the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York. It was used, and contributed greatly to the singer's success, in 1844 in the Parma edition of *Ernani* which closely followed the overwhelming success of the premiere in Venice.

We owe the romanza "Oh dolore" to a star singer, namely Napoleone Moriani: it was composed for a performance of *Attila* at La Scala in the carnival season 1846–47. The autograph in full score is in La Scala's Museo Teatrale, even though the work was published in an edition for voice and piano by the publishers Lucca, and later by Ricordi. This is a valuable aria, lyrically expansive, with melodic breadth and great emotional tension: the harp, dear to Verdi, provides the background from which, as was often to happen subsequently, arise the sensuous melodic meanderings of a taut tenor voice.

"Io la vidi", the first in chronological order of the pieces on this disc, is a fragment of an opera, in all probability incomplete, to a text by Calisto Bassi: *Il solitario ed Eloisa*, which was also set to music by other composers including Giovanni Pacini. The date of composition was around 1835. It is certainly an immature work, but lyrically expansive, with Bellinian *bel canto* writing unusual even in the earliest Verdi: the autograph, tormented and uncertain, almost like a first draft, is also in the Mary Flager Cary Collection in the Pierpont Library in New York. We have the celebrated Mario, Conte di Candia, to thank for Jacopo's cabaletta from Act I of *I due Foscari* which follows the cavatina "Dal più remoto esilio". This piece was completely

unknown until the discovery of a manuscript copy, perhaps unique, in the Bibliotèque Nationale in Paris by the eminent British scholar Julian Budden. The piece, although it was never officially approved by Verdi, concerned him enough to make him write a letter with detailed instructions about how it should be performed, with a complete transcription of the text: it offers the interpreter, who must be a virtuoso of the highest rank, an outstanding vehicle for displaying his brilliance. The "Nouvelle Romance pour Villaret" concludes in chronological terms the series of pieces inspired by the great tenors: it replaces the aria "O jour de peine" and was motivated by the wish to give a special chance to the tenor Villaret who had had an outstanding success at the Paris Opéra in Rossini's *Guillaume Tell*.

It is well known that Verdi composed an overture in 1872 for the Milan premiere of *Aida*, in which he perhaps secretly invested artistic hopes, it is well known that he rehearsed it behind closed doors at La Scala, it is well known that he immediately withdrew it, judging it with harsh and decisive words, and it is well known that he stubbornly resisted gentle pressure from musicians who wished to know the work. But it is less well known that in 1940 Arturo Toscanini, having somehow come into possession of the autograph, gave a performance of it in New York with the NBC Symphony Orchestra. And it is also less well known that the Accademia d'Italia organised a performance of it in the Farnesina Gardens with the Orchestra dell'Accademia di Santa Cecilia conducted by Bernardino Molinari. Subsequently all trace of these public presentations was destroyed and a thick layer of dust settled on the work once again. But the original tape of Toscanini's performance was still in the Recorded Sound Archives at the Lincoln Center in New York: study of this, together with the contemporary manuscript copy, was the basis of this edition, which had its first public performance at La Scala on 2 November 1977, conducted by Claudio Abbado. It is thus possible to have a clear conception of this last Verdi overture, which reveals a thoughtful and perhaps too abstract Verdi, engaged in the effort of superimposing the various melodic ideas which characterise the various characters in *Aida*, seeking dramatic contrast — rather than counterpoint — whose true musical effectiveness is only occasionally realised. Nevertheless the resulting "effect" is still powerful today.

Although Verdi's sense of frustration at his first and only hearing of the work was probably sincere and certainly based more on considerations of overall dramatic balance than on musical grounds, he was aware that the aims he had set himself were too ambitious. This, it seems to me, should not prevent this creation from taking its place — with the added attraction of its special circumstances — among the other overtures which Verdi's genius has bequeathed to us.

Pietro Spada

## *Ernani*
*Odi il voto*

*Iago*
D'Ernani i fidi chiedono
parlare al duce lor

*Silva*
Or ben fa che s'avanzino
infiamma loro ardor

*Ernani*
Padre con essi intrepido
m'avrai vendicator
Odi il voto, o grande Iddio
che al tuo soglio un cor ti porta.
Deh ti piaccia il brando mio
di quel sangue dissetar.
Nell'angoscia del mio core
questo è sol che mi conforta
del trafitto genitore
l'ombra inulta alfin placare,
l'ombra inulta io vo' placar.

## *Attila*
*Oh dolore!*

*Foresto*
Oh dolore! ed io vivea
sol pensando alla spergiura
fin l'esilio a me parea
men deserto e men crudel
ogni colpo di sventura
mi feria ma non nel cor
ah fui beato in quell'amore
come un angelo nel cielo.

## *Ernani*
*Hear the vow*

*Iago*
Ernani's faithful supporters ask
to speak to their leader.

*Silva*
Very well, let them come,
foment their devotion.

*Ernani*
Father, with these my fellows
I shall fearlessly avenge your death.
Almighty God, hear the vow
this heart lays at your door.
Ah, may it please you to quench
my sword with my enemy's blood.
The only thought to console
my tormented heart
is that of laying to rest at last
my murdered father's unavenged shade,
his unavenged shade I would lay to rest.

## *Attila*
*Oh, sorrow!*

*Foresto*
Oh, sorrow! And I have lived
by thinking only of her treachery,
until even exile seemed to me
less solitary and less cruel.
Each blow misfortune dealt
did wound me, but not my heart,
ah, in that love I was blessed
like an angel in heaven.

## *Attila*
*Io la vidi*

*I tenore*
Io la vidi e a quell'aspetto
dolce ahi quanto! e tutto amore
un violento ignoto affetto
s'avventò s'apprese al core.
Da quel dì più mio non sono
sol di lei penso e ragiono
un sospir che suo non sia
mai s'accoglie mai per me
l'alma ell'è dell'alma mia
tutto in terra ell'è per me

*II tenore*
Ti trasporti ?

*I tenore*
Oh taci, taci, tu non sai
qual vita io vivo
le speranze son fallaci
d'ogni ben il ciel m'ha privo
l'anatema di vendetta
sul capo mio un Dio scagliò.

*II tenore*
Ma da Elodia che ne speri?

*I tenore*
Nulla, nulla
eppur vendetta io bramo
le dirò ch'io l'amo
che a lei vivo le dirò.
E ove ciò mi torni invano
nel tuo sen conforto avrò.

## *Attila*
*I saw her*

*Tenor I*
I saw her, and at that sight,
alas, so sweet, and full of love,
a violent and unknown emotion
flared up and overwhelmed my heart.
Since then I have not been my own man;
I think only of her, and believe
I shall never welcome
any sigh that is not hers.
She is the soul of my soul,
everything on earth is she to me.

*Tenor II*
Have you lost your reason?

*Tenor I*
Oh, silence, silence; you know
nothing of the life I am leading.
Hope is treacherous,
heaven has taken from me all I love,
A god has cast upon my head
the anathema of vengeance.

*Tenor II*
What do you hope for from Elodia?

*Tenor I*
Nothing, nothing,
and yet I long for vengeance.
I shall tell her I love her,
that I live for her sake, shall I say.
And wherever I go in vain
I shall find solace on your breast.

Quand'Ella andasse a stringere
un detestato imene
tu sol potrai le lagrime
dividere con me
lagnarmi teco e gemere
potrò di tante pene
il duol con te dividere
parlar di lei con te
finché non giunga a prendermi
morte col freddo pié.

*II tenore*
Deh cessa il pianto
vincere possibile non è

When she enters into
a hateful marriage,
you alone will be able
to share in my tears.
With you I shall lament
and bemoan all my sorrows,
share my pain with you,
speak with you of her,
until death, with icy step,
comes to claim me.

*Tenor II*
Ah, stop, tears cannot
be conquered.

## *I due Foscari*
*Dal più remoto esilio*

*Fante*
Qui ti rimani alquanto,
finché il Consiglio te
di nuovo appelli.

*Jacopo*
Ah sì, ch'io senta ancora,
ch'io respiri aura non mista
a gemiti e sospiri.
Brezza del suo natio
il volto a baciar voli
all'innocento!…
Ecco la mia Venezia!…
ecco il suo mare!…
Regina dell'onde,
Io ti saluto!… io ti saluto!…
Sebben meco crudele,

## *I due Foscari*
*From furthest exile*

*Guard*
Stay here a while,
until the Council
summons you again.

*Jacopo*
Ah yes, let me once more feel
and breathe air that is free
from sighs and groaning.
Breeze of my native land,
fly here to kiss the face
of an innocent man!...
Behold, my Venice!...
behold, her sea!...
Queen of the waves,
I salute you!...
Despite your cruelty to me,

io ti son pur de' figli
il più fedele.
Dal più remoto esilio,
sull'ali del desio
a te sovente rapido
volava il pensier mio.
Come adorata vergine
te vagheggiando il core,
l'esilio ed il dolore
quasi sparìano per me.

I remain the most loyal
of your sons.
From furthest exile,
on wings of desire,
my thoughts did often
fly swiftly to you;
as if for a beloved maiden,
my heart did yearn for you,
and for me grief and exile
would almost melt away.

## *I due Foscari*

*Sì lo sento Iddio mi chiama*
Cabaletta di Jacopo

Sì lo sento, Iddio mi chiama
de' mal miei alfin pietoso
quest'ingrata a chi più l'ama
un sospir, un sospir non mi darà.
Cara donna, figli amati
voi perdete padre e sposo
ma sottrarvi a que' spietati
più che in terra in ciel potrà.

## *I due Foscari*

*Yes, I hear God calling me*

Yes, I hear God calling me,
taking pity at last on my woes.
The ingrate whom he loves more
will not sigh for me, for me.
Dear wife, beloved children,
husband and father you will lose,
but he will be better able in heaven than
on earth
to save you from those pitiless men.

## *Les Vêpres siciliennes*

*Ô toi que j'ai chérie*
Nouvelle Romance composée pour M. Villaret

Ô toi que j'ai chérie
toi qui charmais ma vie
hélas, es tu ravie
à mon bonheur à mon amour ah.
Rêve douce flamme
qui berce mon amour
faut il te perdre
et sans retour.
Ah la voix du ciel
parle et m'ordonne
sauve le père que tu chéris
je l'ai sauvé !
Tout m'abandonne
grâce Hélène pardonne
mon Hélène pardonne
ah grâce plutôt la mort
qu'un regard de mépris.

## *Les Vêpres siciliennes*

**(The Sicilian Vespers)**
*O you whom I so loved*

O you whom I so loved,
you who enchanted my life,
alas, you have been snatched
from my happiness, from my love, ah.
Dream, gentle flame
that lulls my love,
must I lose you
for ever?
Ah, the voice of heaven
speaks and orders me,
"Save the father you cherish!"
I have saved him!
All abandons me.
Mercy, Hélène, forgive me,
my Hélène, forgive me,
ah, mercy, better death
than a look of scorn.

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*Recording location:*
CTC Studios, Milan
January 1978 and April 1980

*Publishers:*
Boccaccini & Spada (1, 8)
Suvini Zerboni (2–4, 6, 7)
G. Ricordi & C. (5)

*Photos:* Lorenzo Capellini

*Introductory notes from the original LP*
Fonit Cetra LIC 9001 (1980)

*Note translation:* Nigel Jamieson

*Sung text translation:* Susannah Howe

*Original graphic design:* Fabio Berruti
www.infinitestudio.it adapted by WLP Ltd

*Remastering 2012:*
AUDIOMASTER (Cologno Monzese)

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